

# Cutting to the Chase

## Proven Methods to Change Environmental Behaviors

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**Sage Enviro**

# How can we change behaviors?

- We commonly focus on changing people's:
  - Knowledge
  - Attitudes
  - Beliefs

## What we say to dogs

Okay, Ginger! I've had it!  
You stay out of the garbage!  
Understand, Ginger? Stay out  
of the garbage, or else!



## What they hear

blah blah GINGER blah  
blah blah blah blah  
blah blah GINGER blah  
blah blah blah blah...



How well do  
these strategies  
work?

# What Works

- Changing knowledge, attitudes, belief may not change behavior

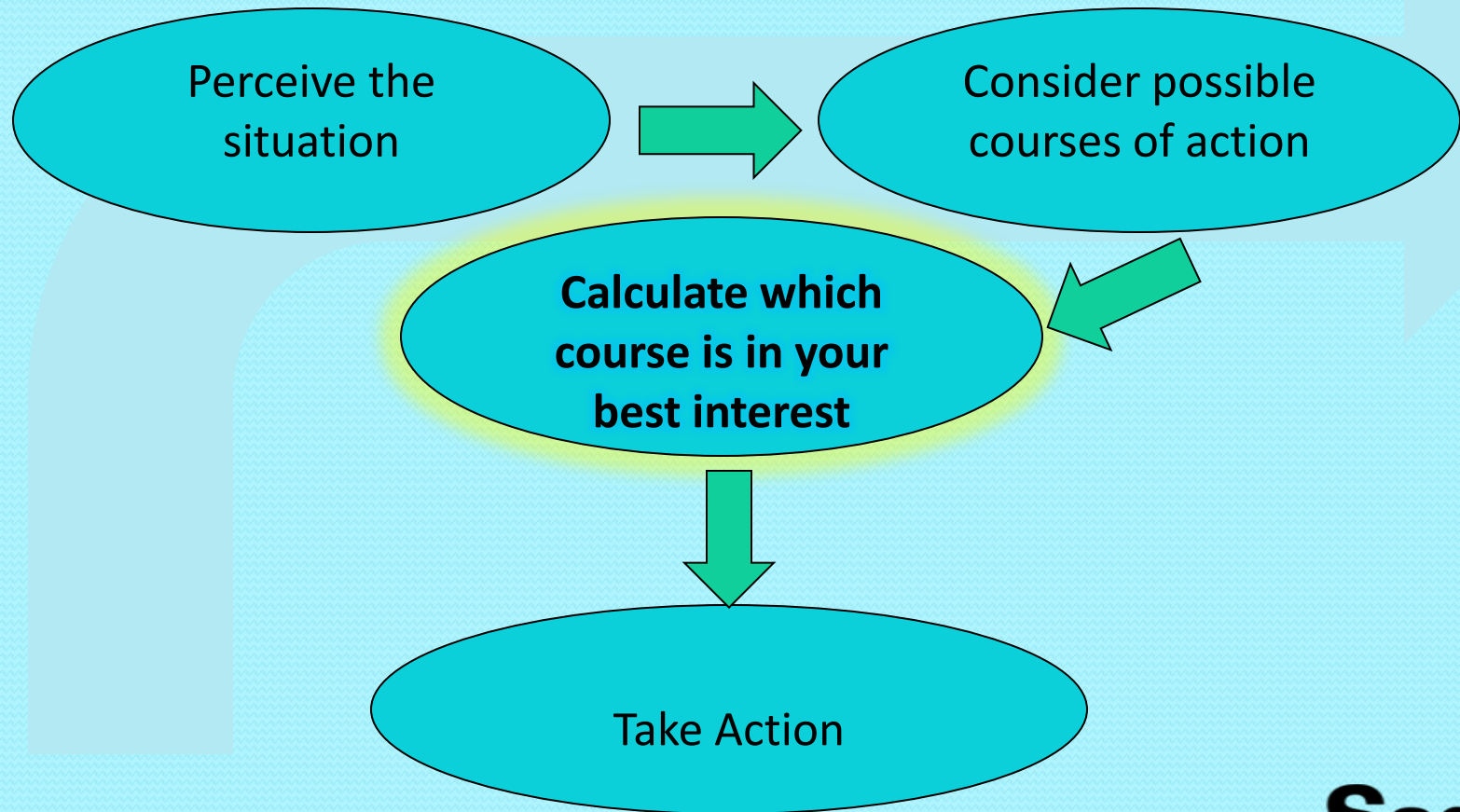
**AND**

- You can change behavior without changing any of these things

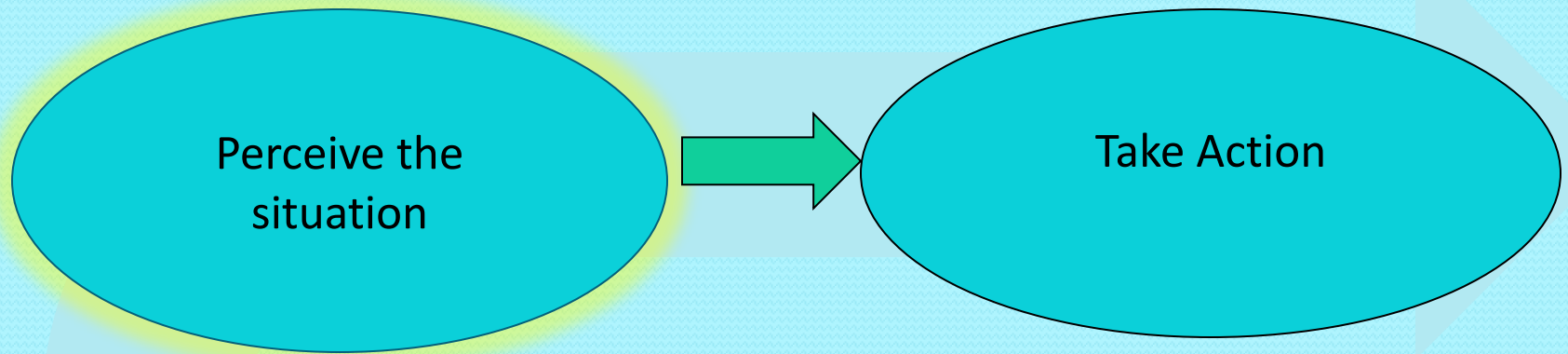
Insight #1:

Rationality may be overrated.

# Default **Rational** Decision-Making Assumptions



# But most of the time we...



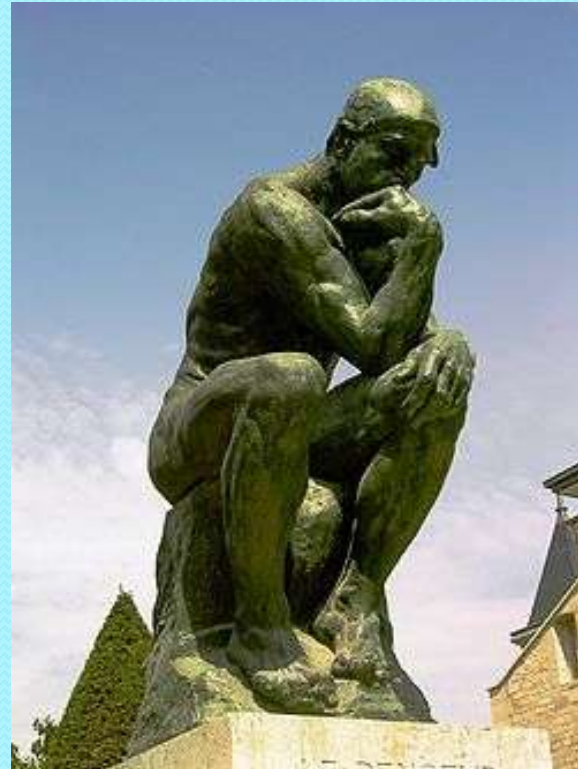


# Two States of Mind

Habitual



Executive/Rational

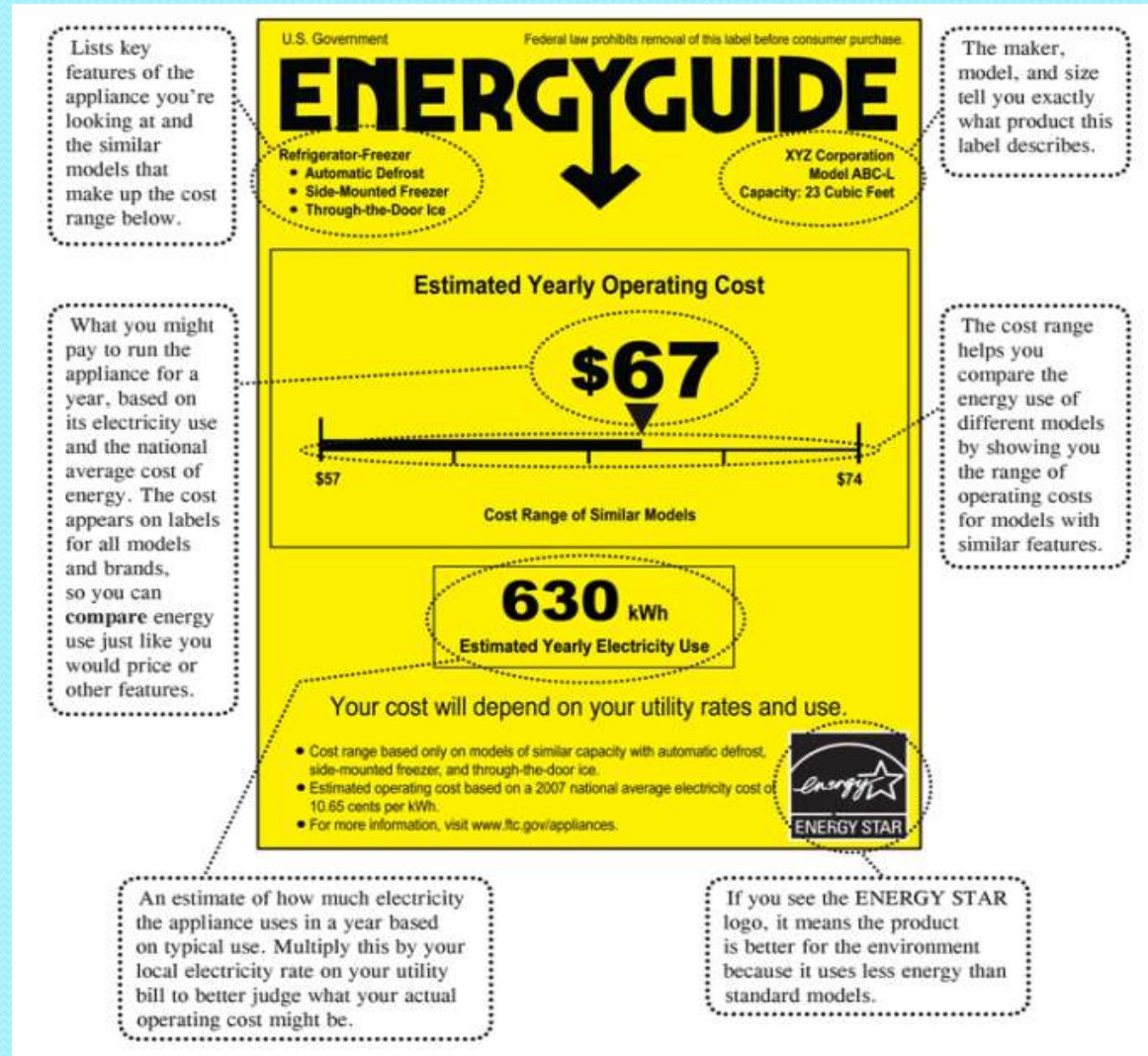




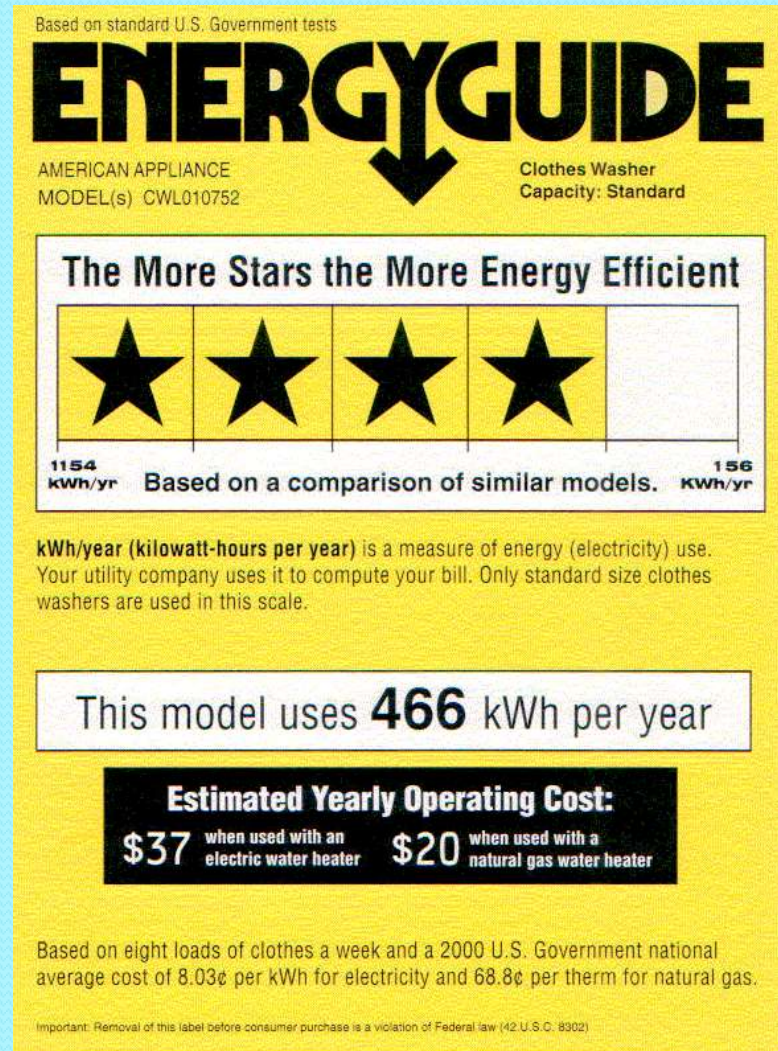
# Who's in charge?



# What mind do we market to?



Changing to international label format “*could have estimated savings of close to 100 billion kWh per year.*” (ACEEE)



# Brain State Marketing Insight

EITHER

- Be able to wake up and reach people when their executive brain is turned on

OR

- Be clear, simple and direct about what you want them to do

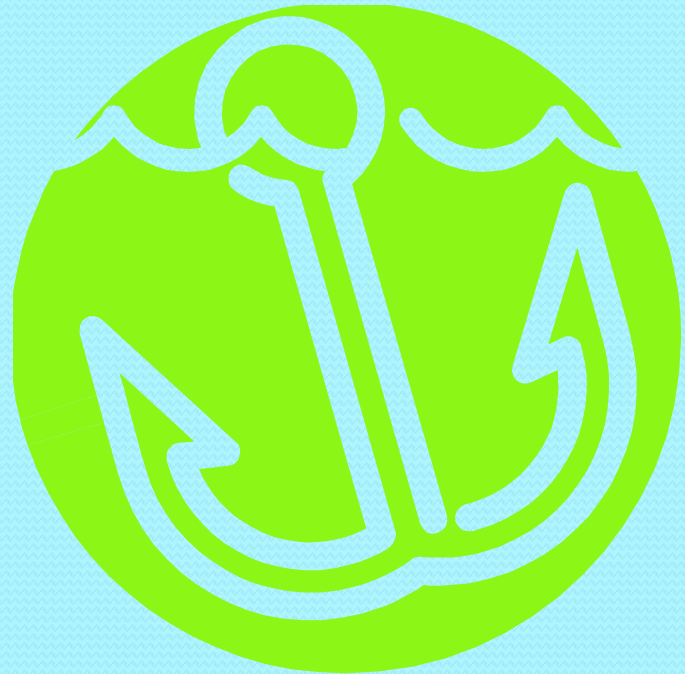


## Insight #2:

What we think and do are tied to starting points.

# People start with anchors

- Numbers
- Norms, cultural frames
- Childhood habits
- Donations



# We can change our anchors





# People stick with “default” options

- Retirement plan sign-up: opt-in vs. opt-out
- Auto-pay



Insight #3:

“Free” is hard to resist.



vs



## Time One

- Kiss 1¢
  - 27% picked this
- Lindt 15¢
  - 73% picked this

## Time Two

- Kiss **FREE**
  - 69% picked this
- Lindt 14¢
  - 31% picked this

Results  
reversed

# Amazon uses “free” for more sales

- Buy second book, get **FREE** shipping
  - Dramatic sales increase
- **Except in France**
  - Charged 20 cents – no increase
  - When changed to FREE, sales skyrocketed

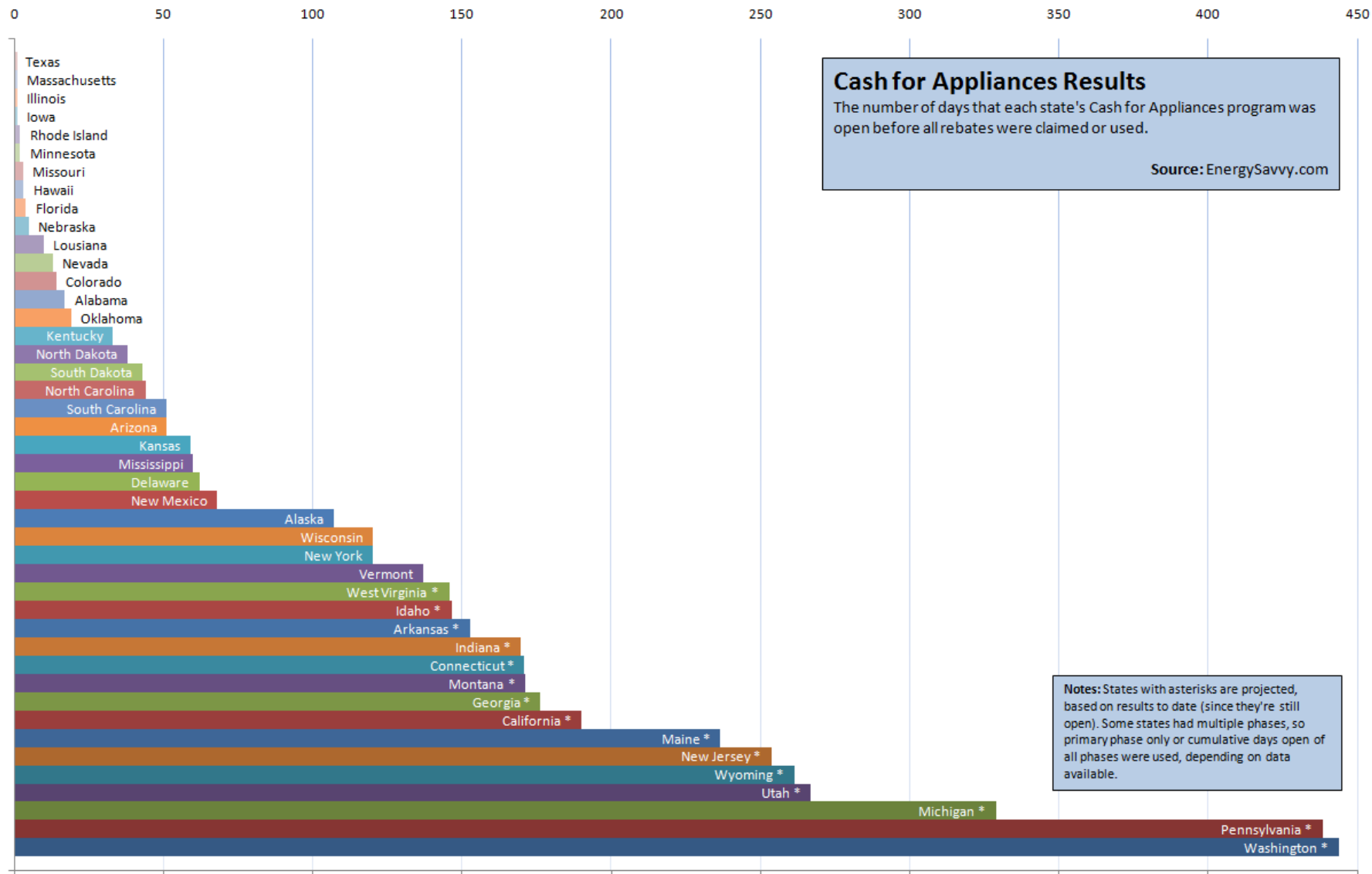
# What motivates people?

## Psychology of Influence



Insight #4:

We want to be consistent.





# We are our own internal judges

- People judge themselves by their own behavior
- Your bet improves horse's odds



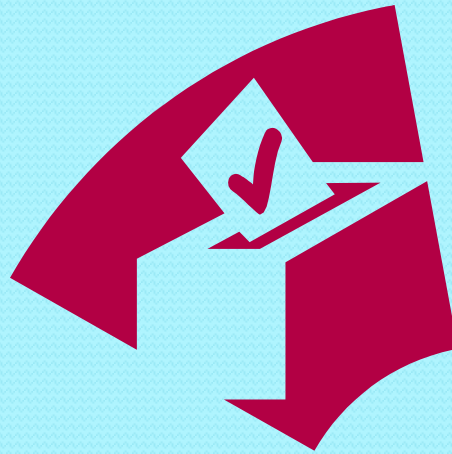
# Commitment engages consistency

- Reservations: more participation
- Foot in the door

DRIVE CAREFULLY

# Prediction helps consistency

- Improving voter turnout:
  - Ask people to predict their behavior
  - Have them “rehearse” their behavior



Insight #5:  
We hate to lose.

# People desire what seems scarce

- “One day only”
- “This week only”
- “Hurry! Event Ends Soon”
- Energy rebates: reservations created perception of scarcity

**WHISTLER BLACKCOMB**

# 72 HOUR SALE

**AMAZING LODGING DEALS**

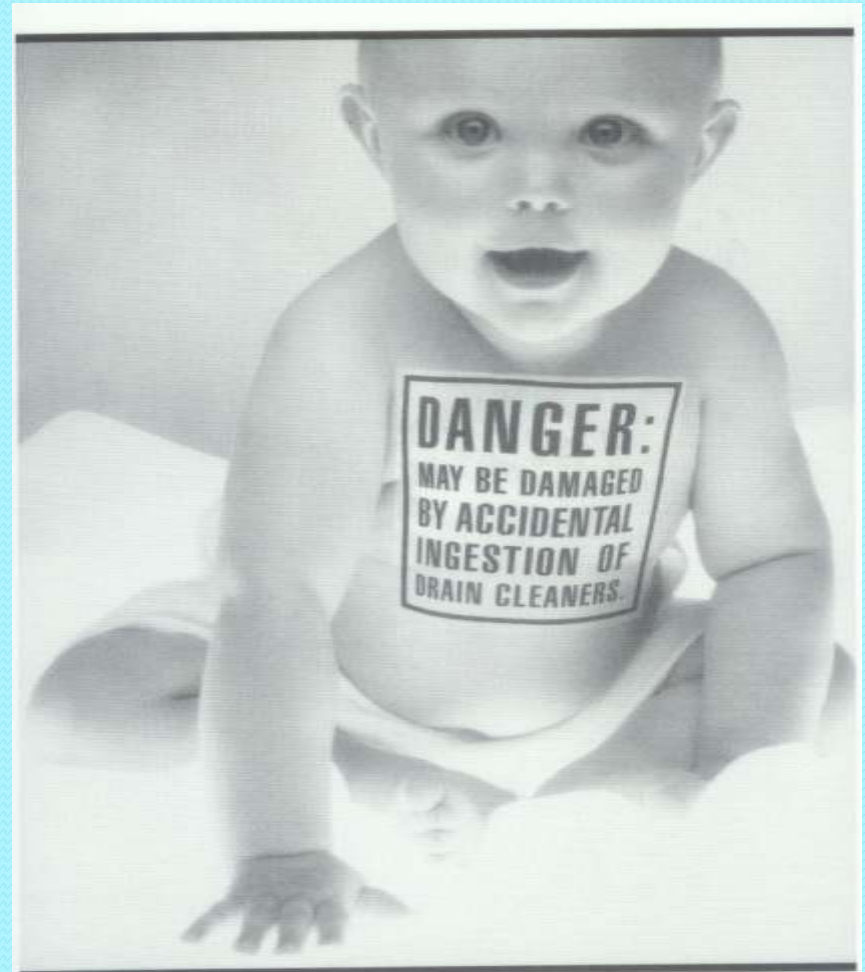
SAVE UP TO **45%** LOOK FOR THIS ICON! **72 HR SALE**

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# Loss persuades more than gain

- Loss of money, health, harms to kids
- People are paralyzed without solutions
- “Craig McCaw is a smart man”



Amazing what you can learn by reading the label.  
The mere presence of cleaning products in your home can put

**NOTHING.** If there is no warning, the product is the safest.  
So when you shop, search out the least hazardous means of



Insight #6:  
Other people have more  
influence than we're willing to  
admit.



# People deny influence of others

- BUT it's greatest predictor of our behavior



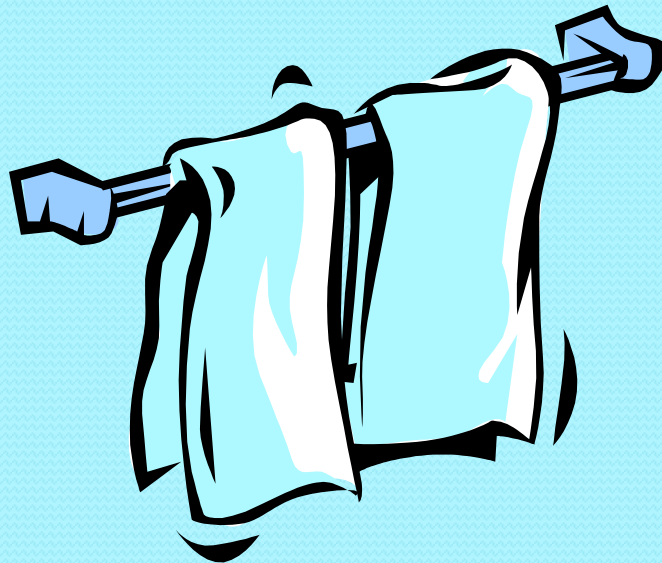
“We’d better get  
ours now.”

- Both negative and positive norms are powerful



# “Join your fellow guests...”

- “Help save the environment”
- “Join your fellow guests in helping save the environment”: 34% increase in towel reuse
- Even more change when guests were told that *majority of guests staying in this room hung up their towels*



Insight #7:  
People are influenced by  
those they like.



# We say yes to people we like



- Tupperware parties
- Joe Girard

# We connect with people we like



- Principle of association
- Mirroring
- Teamwork increases liking

Insight #8:  
People will repay favors.



# We have always shared



- Our ancestors shared food, skills, obligations

# We do things for people we like

- Benjamin Franklin: Book borrower
- Gave money back: more favorable view
- Social obligation vs. indebtedness



Insight #9:  
People look to experts.

# “Catch Me If You Can”

- Titles, clothes, trappings all convey authority





# What commands authority?

- Arguing against your own interest increases trust
  - Avis: “We try harder”
  - “Motel 6: Our rooms aren’t fancy, but our prices aren’t fancy”
- Third party (even agent) singing your praise is more persuasive

**Avis is only No.2  
in rent a cars.  
So why go with us?**



We try harder.  
(When you're not the biggest,  
you have to.)

We just can't afford dirty ash-  
trays. Or half-empty gas tanks. Or  
worn wipers. Or unwashed cars.  
Or low tires. Or anything less than  
seat-adjusters that adjust. Heaters that heat. Defrost-  
ers that defrost.

Obviously, the thing we try hardest for is just to be  
nice. To start you out right with a new car, like a lively,  
super-torque Ford, and a pleasant smile. To know, say,  
where you get a good pastrami sandwich in Duluth.

Why?

Because we can't afford to take you for granted.

Go with us next time.

The line at our counter is shorter.

Insight #10:  
Feedback is important.



# Feedback helps us know

- Reduces anxiety, reinforces choice
- Important for learning
- People see things add up

**OUR GOAL!**



# So what?

- Feedback and comparisons should be visual, relevant, sympathetic
- How many trees are saved, impact on Puget Sound, etc.

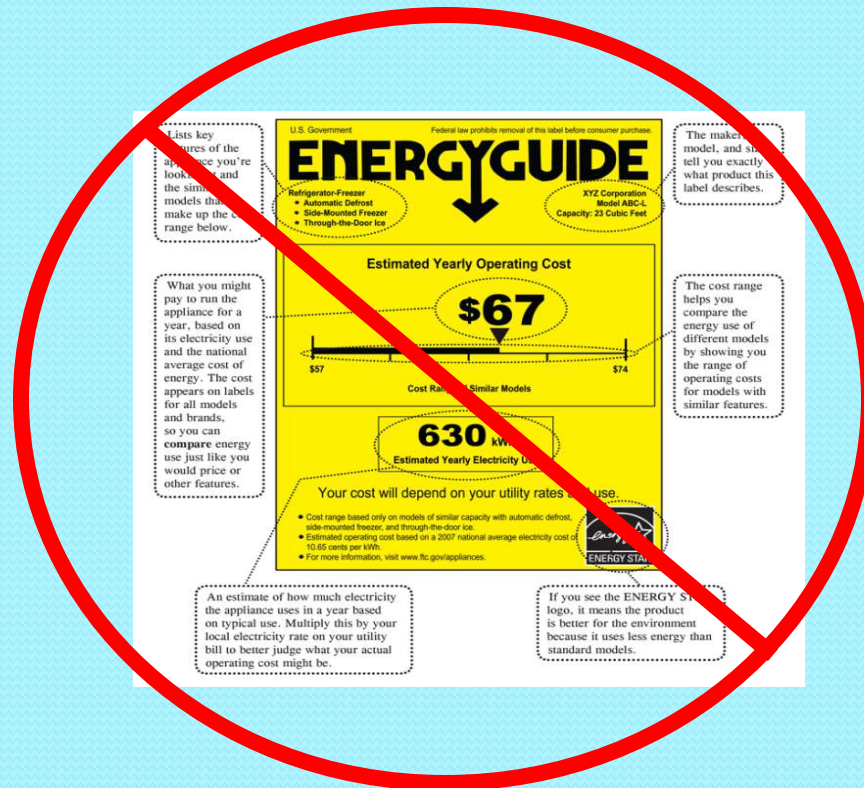


# Insight #11:

We can use these insights to make a difference.

# Think about Homer Simpson

- “Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler.”  
–Albert Einstein



# Work from starting points

- What anchors are important to your audiences?
- Find ways to make the default “opting out” to green methods

# Use the power of “free”

- What can you give away to encourage behavior change?
- How can you make environmental “goods” free?



# Use consistency & commitment

- Ask for small action
- Ask them to predict their behavior



# “Don’t miss out...”

- Use frames of scarcity
  - Give solutions: how to avoid loss



“One day only...”

# How do we create norms?

- Engage groups of people
- Use similar people for reference point
- Support programs to build stronger community norms



# Find ways to increase liking

- Connect to something positive
- Try mirroring
- Engage people in solving problems together
- Ask opponent a favor



# Establish authority

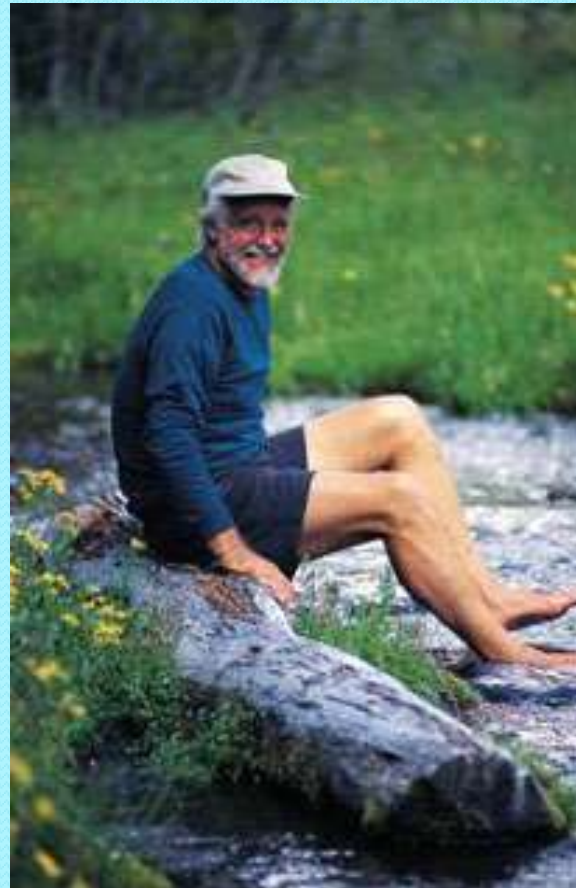
- Point out both weaknesses and strengths
- Use testimonials, trustworthy spokespeople





# Provide feedback & comparisons

- Develop feedback mechanisms: what are impacts?
- What are relevant and visual “equivalents”?





# Support youth education

- Anchors
- Values
- Transformative experiences



# What should we ask?

- Explore “drivers” through research
- **Be sure to ask** “*Are there moral implications, limits of using these drivers?*”

# Thanks!

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